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Drag Lake needs you

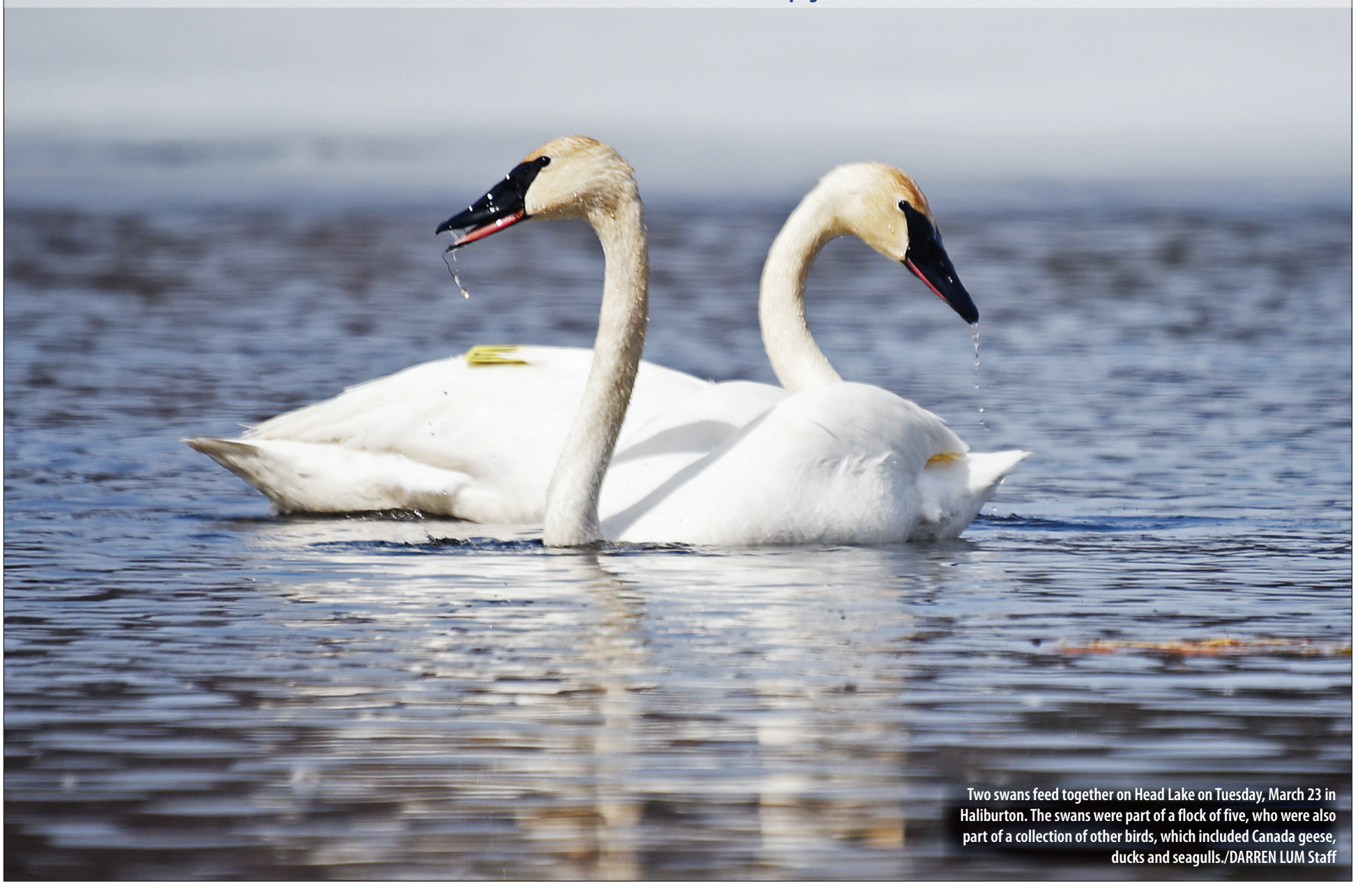
Local group calling on 'citizen scientists' to help tackle Eurasian watermilfoil issue. See page 2.

Marching for change

The Concerned Citizens of Haliburton marched through Minden for the FridaysForFuture Global Day of Climate Action on March 19. See page 4.

Maybelle's musings

See what our favourite Lake WhaddayathinkImean resident has to say as Easter approaches. See page 7.



Two swans feed together on Head Lake on Tuesday, March 23 in Haliburton. The swans were part of a flock of five, who were also part of a collection of other birds, which included Canada geese, ducks and seagulls./DARREN LUM Staff

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Citizen scientists find common goal against Eurasian watermilfoil

SUE TIFFIN
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Eurasian watermilfoil, which grows under the surface of the water, blooms in late July and early August. /Photo by Mike Podmore

The Eurasian Watermilfoil Working Group is hoping that in spreading awareness of the invasive species, the spreading of the aquatic plant itself can be reduced.

The group, a sub-committee of the Drag and Spruce Lakes Property Owners' Association (DSLPOA), has been working to control the local spread of Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) with a project that has raised more than $40,000 toward a $50,000 goal so far through donations from property owners.

"It is an all-hands-on-deck kind of problem that [we] will benefit from if we're all helping out," said Jim Miners, vice-president of the DSLPOA and member of the working group. "It's an important project, it's a project that needs everybody on board to support it. We're happy to have people's donations, we're happy to have people's involvement as volunteers, and all we can do is ask."

Eurasian watermilfoil is an invasive, alien aquatic plant that is a perennial native in Europe, Asia and northern Africa but has spread to every continent except Antarctica, according to a presentation made by Miners to help educate lake associations, organizations and the general public about the plant. It was first identified in North America in the 19th century, and in Ontario in Lake Erie, in 1961. A look at EDDMapS, which tracks invasive species sightings, shows that the plant is prevalent throughout North America – and four known outbreaks on Drag Lake are included in that tally.

The first outbreak in Drag Lake was identified near Harris Beach, in 2015, by Mike Podmore, who passed away earlier this year.

"He was dedicated to this project, he was known on the lake as somebody who loved the lake and everything about the lake, and wanted to do what he could to protect the natural beauty and the natural elements of the lake," said Miners.

Podmore brought the plant to the attention of lake steward Bert Bicknell, who began educating himself on Eurasian watermilfoil and finding out what others were doing to control it.

"Most lake associations who are dealing with this problem are treating this as a problem they are going to be dealing with forever," said Miners. "It's not a matter of getting rid of EWM, it's a matter of controlling the spread and the growth of EWM.
And most lake associations will tell you, if you can control it, you've been successful."

The problems posed by the perennial, which grows under the water surface, are many: it spreads quickly and grows densely, causes odour as it decays, impedes growth of native plants and harms habitat, and can cause swimmers

see page 3

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‘Citizen scientists’ encouraged to help tackle watermilfoil problem

from page 2

and boats to become entangled.

“There are stories of boats going into [Frenchman’s Bay in Pickering] and just stopping dead because the motor’s tangled, or the sailboat can’t get through,” said Miners. “It’s not a pretty story.”

Additionally, it can cause waterfront property value to drop as much as 15 per cent.

After understanding the importance of dealing with EWM outbreaks, the working group began researching and planning to control its spread, working with technical support from The Canadian Centre for Invasive Species, The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, U-Links (Trent U and Fleming College) and other lake associations.

“One of the things we’ve learned is that anyone working on this for more than a year is happy to share with anybody else, what they’ve discovered,” said Miners.

The DSLPOA applied to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry in 2017 to allow the property owners’ association to install biodegradable matting over the outbreak at Harris Beach to reduce photosynthesis and thus suppress further growth and propagation of the weed, a solution that is deemed most effective (cutting the plants risks further outbreaks with the creation of fragments). That project was approved in 2019 for a very specific time period – between July 16 and October 1, in 2020 and required extensive work in enlisting volunteers, fundraising and finding commercial dive teams who could help lay coconut fibre matting on top of the watermilfoil to see how it might be controlled from spreading further out. With that done – 13 coconut fibre mats were laid over one outbreak – the group plans to monitor if the project was successful – in part with an underwater camera that can give the group a close-up look at how the cover is working. If it proves to be effective, it’s one the group hopes to use again on the other outbreaks of the weed that have been identified in Drag Lake.

“We’re turning everybody on the lake who’s interested into a citizen scientist. Get out there in your kayak, get out there in your canoe, or your paddleboard or whatever, go along the shoreline, here’s what you’re looking for. The pictures are pretty clear, it’s going to look like this, and if you find it, don’t break it, whatever you do. Let us know. Citizen science is a good term, we’re also seeing it as a great community builder around the two lakes. There’s a common goal now for people to get behind.”

That common goal has led to 252 concerned property owners helping to contribute to the fund – some more than once - to keep EWM under control, with Miners saying that 250 property owners still have yet to contribute.

“We’re trying to be creative in terms of getting them to accept that this is a problem that everyone needs to be concerned about,” he said. “This sounds a bit trite. But the weed is working 24/7. It’s planning what it’s going to do this summer. So if we’re not planning what we’re going to do this summer, we don’t stand a chance.”

Besides protecting Drag Lake, Miners said it’s important to help stop the weed from spreading into Spruce Lake, and to other lakes through boats that are used on different waterways. He believes that it’s not necessarily a problem only affecting Drag Lake.

“If we continue to find other outbreaks, and we’re to report all of them, then all of a sudden we look like the worst lake in Haliburton County on [the EDDMapS tracker],” he said. “It’s a fine line. Ask me if I believe there’s EWM in every lake in Haliburton County and I will say, I think it’s more likely that it’s in every lake than that it’s not in every lake. People don’t know what they’re looking for. We didn’t know what we were looking for, here.”

Miners has added grant writing to his to-do list, looking for funding support to help projects like what the DSLPOA has initiated. While the efforts in the past year have been successful, he wants to ensure the project is sustainable, without property owners fundraising each year if more outbreaks occur.

“It’s life’s worth, job security,” he said of the weed. “If you’re in the business of controlling EWM, you’ve got work for a lifetime. It’s not a short-term project by any means, and everybody who gets into it, every lake association who gets into it finds that out very quickly.”

On March 23, Miners and Rick Wesselman presented to Dysart council regarding how the EWM group and the municipality might work together on the project. On March 28, the EWM group is hosting a Zoom meeting with representatives of Dysart council, the Coalition of Haliburton Property Owners’ Associations and Dysart lake associations to further discuss the project.

For more information about the local Eurasian watermilfoil project or the Drag and Spruce Lakes Property Owners’ Association, visit https://www.dragandsprucelakes.ca/.

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Climate change demonstrators hit the streets

DARREN LUM
County Life Staff

Quietly, demonstrators stood on the sidewalks, lined on either side of Bobcaygeon Road in the heart of Minden's downtown, holding signs with slogans for a healthier world and questions challenging the government for passerbys to read and consider, related to combating climate change.

Organized by Concerned Citizens of Haliburton County, the climate change demonstration started with a little more than a dozen masked men and women, physically distanced, to do their part in raising awareness locally related to the FridaysforFuture Global Day of Climate Action held around the world on March 19.

Bonnie Roe, organizer of the local event in Minden, said this event is about keeping the public connected to the issues of climate change, which still persist during the pandemic, and how a little action can go a long way to helping the cause.

"Anything any of us can do is what we're trying to promote awareness about and that can be simply the appliances you buy, reusing plastic bags, not buying disposable water bottles, reducing waste in the landfill sites, you know, walking more," she said. "We can all do something and I think that's what's important. It's pretty important we come together in solidarity and we need to push our governments to do something and that's why the theme this time is #NOMOREEMPTYPROMISES. That's the whole thing because that's all we got. The government [says they] will be doing something in 2030 or 2050, but we need it now and that's why other groups like ourselves and across the world are protesting today."

Among the demonstrators that came to the Minden downtown between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. was Sheila Ziman. She stood on the bridge, holding her sign encouraging the protection of wetlands and said combating climate change requires education and that's why she came out.

"I think the more people understand the relationship between a healthy environment and healthy people the better it is. Also, how serious a problem climate change is now. When I first moved here about 34 years ago there was a lot more snow. There were a lot more days that were colder. I can remember weeks when it was below minus 20, minus 25, so you could see [the change]. If you ask the old timers, they can tell you how the climate has changed," she said.

She adds, 34 years ago gardening was challenged with multiple frosts, but now that has been reduced and there are at least three frost-free months.

> *"We can all do something and I think that's what's important.*
>
> — Bonnie Roe

Ziman is also concerned about the provincial government's handling of protected areas such as provincially significant wetlands, as determined by the science-based ranking system known as the Wetland Evaluation System, which informs Ontario's land use planning process.

"Because wetlands are so important in terms of storing carbon and we have so many wetlands in Haliburton, it's really important for me that we maintain that protection. It's part education. It's part concern over what the government is doing in terms of walking back protections and disrespecting the protection they previously afforded wetlands," she said.

One example that recently grabbed headlines was how the Ford government granted a minister's zoning order (MZO) in October to allow for construction of an Amazon warehouse on Pickering wetlands near Duffins Creek, which is designated as provincially significant.

It's reported Amazon had considered building a retail warehouse there, but did not sign a lease for the property and has decided against using the site because of environmental concerns. A spokesperson for Amazon said they did not request the MZO.

Ziman said it angers her when she sees wetlands get destroyed throughout Haliburton County because of the adverse effect it has, particularly in areas such as Minden where flooding has been an issue.

"Wetlands are like sponges so they hold that water and then they slowly release it so that's important, but they're also important, and I think people forget this, for drinking water because they help recharge the aquifers and it's important to keep the quality of our drinking water good," she said. "So, people sometimes forget that and they got a wetland on their property and they'll just fill it. Dump the ol' fridge in there and then their well is not too far away and so they forget that can lead to pollution of their drinking water. So, it's all really important to protect wetlands."

The inspiration for FridaysforFuture is related to teen activist Greta Thunberg, who started protesting the Swedish government on Fridays in August, 2018. There was also local inspiration by local teen activist Jurgen Shantz of Haliburton, who held four climate change protests outside the Dysart municipal offices, Roe said.

The day's effort didn't just include demonstrations in groups out in public, but also included people posting to social media to raise awareness and demonstrate the threat climate change poses. Although the Minden demonstration was capped at 25 people, Roe said, there were some potential demonstrators who weren't able to make the event in Minden because of maple syrup production commitments.

Roe said there will be an effort to hold demonstrations like this throughout the county in the future rather than with past recent demonstrations, which were held in the village of Haliburton because the Concerned Citizens looked to encourage high school students and young people to join them.

Encouraging youth involvement will continue though, she adds.

"It's their future," she said.

For more information and how to be part of future efforts email Concerned Citizens at info@concernedcitizenshc.ca.

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Hawks rink receive belated provincial championship banner

DARREN LUM

County Life Staff

It was a long time coming for the Red Hawks boys' curling team, but the Ontario School Curling Provincial Championship title banner has come home.

Delivered by committee chairman Carlos Gregorio, the title banner delivery and presentation outside the school was close to a year in the waiting for the Hawks team of skip, Jacob Dobson, vice, Liam Little, second Corin Gervais, and lead Owen Nicholls, who captured the title following their successful run capped off at the finals for the championship held over the Feb. 13 to 15 weekend in Chatham, Ontario. This weekend competition followed a series of qualification rounds, which included winning the zone title in Haliburton in December, 2019, followed by a regional title win several weeks later in Richmond Hill in February.

Skip Dobson acknowledged the disappointment of lost opportunities related to not being able to curl for the school this past year because of the pandemic, but recognized the importance of what the banner represents.

"We were definitely looking forward to it after last year, going in as favourites and just not being able to play to finish that up. That would have been a real nice highlight," he said, referring to getting to compete for the school and be able to compete towards an OFSAA (Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations) title. "Our goal was to win a provincial [title] and we did."

During the same year of winning the provincial championship, the boys also captured the Kawartha championship title and the COSSA (Central Ontario Secondary Schools Association) championship title,which earned them a berth to OFSAA. Unfortunately, their quest to compete to be the best school and take the OFSAA title ended when the pandemic hit, which ended all athletics and large gatherings.

The banner is expected to be included in the trophy case at the high school and once it is allowed it will be transferred to the Haliburton Curling Club where the team practiced before the pandemic.

The team earned the honour of being able to keep the provincial trophy for a year and each member also received champion badges, personal trophies and jackets.

Although Little and Dobson will graduate and pursue post-secondary education, Nicholls and Gervais are expected to return to HHSS next year.

Coach Darrell Dobson, who was assisted by Erin Nicholls, said, "They peaked right when the pandemic hit and they made it to OFSAA last year. They would have likely done well and then would have been in a good position for a second year so that's a bit of a loss for them. It's a really, really uplifting [thing] to have the banner and the celebration, a reminder."

The Red Hawks boys' curling team's assistant coach, Erin Nicholls, from left, lead, Owen Nicholls, coach, Darrell Dobson, vice, Liam Little, second, Corin Gervais, and skip Jacob Dobson, who holds the Ontario School Curling Provincial Championship title (formerly the Gore Mutual Ontario School Championships) banner after accepting it from Ontario School Curling Provincial Championships committee chairman Carlos Gregario, far left, on Thursday, March 11 at the high school in Haliburton. This was more than a year after the team had captured the title after the finals competition (Feb. 13 to 15) was held because of the pandemic. The banner will be kept in the school until it is moved to the Haliburton Curling Club./DARREN LUM Staff

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CMCA AUDITED

The magical bedroom for Nancy

MICHAEL BARNES
Special to *County Life*

THOSE WHO wish to do something special for their young daughters might do well to take a weekend drive north and visit a very special bedroom.

Nancy Oakes was born to wealth but her father, multimillionaire mining man Sir Harry Oakes, was murdered in the Bahamas when she was only 18 years old and within days her newlywed husband was charged with his murder.

Her husband was acquitted but the couple were divorced soon after and Nancy led a very unsettled life for many years.

So it is natural she would recall with affection the happy early years she spent growing up in Kirkland Lake.

While growing up, Nancy had a place where she could dream and be truly happy. She had her bedroom but it was a very special place and has never been duplicated since.

Nancy Oakes grew up in the family home, the Chateau during the early 1930s. The place was a great log house built in the style of the western prairie school of architecture on the edge of the gold boom town. From the verandah she could see the source of her father's wealth, the great Lake Shore Mine.

The daughter of the then richest man in Canada could see the head frames of several large gold mines.

Her father was very busy but he had done a wonderful thing for his daughter, He had hired a gifted plasterer- sculptor to create for Nancy walls of magic in her bedroom.

Actually there is fine plaster work throughout the house but Nancy's room is so special because the four walls are covered with designs, symbols and figures.

There are nursery rhyme characters, wildlife, toys, historical figures and images from around the world. But not all are readily apparent. This is where the feeling of magic comes in. Due to tricks of light and shadow, some figures are revealed at a time when others appear hidden. Changes in light or the location of the viewer then hide some and bring others to view.

There are animals from Canada, Africa and Australia, giving reference to Oakes' travels and her mother Eunice's home land.

One wall has images of land, sea and air. The ocean gets its turn with fish, a turtle and even a submarine.

There is a whole theme devoted to toys and the east wall has nursery rhyme figures. In the middle there are fairy tales and these are surmounted by landmarks from around the world. It is thought that this wall shows that as one grows older, knowledge and understanding are broadened.

Imagine a little girl growing up, lying in bed and watching the sun edge around the walls of her room. As the welcome warm light travels, she has her own private picture show. At night as she falls asleep other images stand out or fade as the light changes.

Nancy is gone but her bedroom remains to delight us.

See the Museum of Northern History, the Sir Harry Oakes Chateau for details if planning a visit. While there, pick up a pamphlet which gives a tour of Nancy's room.

Michael Barnes is a resident of Minden. You can reach him at michaelbarnes53@hotmail.com

Top 10 people who hear a tree fall in the forest

STEVE GALEA
Humour Columnist

I think by now that old question about a tree falling in the forest has been disproved. But, as far as I know, no one has really specified who is hearing the tree when it falls. So, in the interest of science here, I did a bit of research and here are the top 10 people who hear trees fall in the forest.

1. That old fellow who splurged on the really good hearing aids.
2. The person climbing the tree in question.
3. The guy who yelled "Timber!"
4. That one guy with the really big ears.
5. The person who always chooses the exact wrong location for a tree house.
6. That one really good listener we all know.
7. That person in town who is the first to hear everything.
8. A confused dog playing fetch.
9. That person who is sure they are not just anyone.
10. The guy with the new chainsaw, looking for firewood.

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Magic

Moonglow gliding across Snow,
sliding down icicle fangs dangling from
the eaves,
others, tiny as tears, sprouting in between,
as I reach up to touch the spectral light stroking the
sabres of ice,
my fingertips stinging as they feel the
blades of cold,
a glass tear breaking off in my hand,
as I stand here alongside the birches, moonlight
bathing their bones,
illuminating the scars and gauges splitting open
their flesh,
formed over how many decades of stretching and
reaching and growing
beneath this ageless Sky?
I gawk up at the alabaster face of Moon,
its ripeness fringed by an aureole of
coloured light,
this rounded rainbow painting the night Sky.
I blink up at it a few times, wondering whether I'm
seeing what I'm really seeing,
oblivious to the cold searing my bones,
perplexed and mesmerized by the magic of this rainbow surrounding Moon,
not a pinprick of Star puncturing Sky,
only this hazy glow of Moon glazing Snow,
sculpting shadows into waves of silence that swathe
the night,
frozen as the icicles that dangle from the eaves,
the tiny tear, melting in my palm.
I marvel at how long that one dagger of icicle
has clung,
how much longer 'till its life drips away,
dissolving into a puddle, warmed by Sun.
I stand in the Snow, amongst the birch trees,
hesitating to go back inside,
the lantern of Moon, with its aureole of rainbow,
illuminating the mystery of things I will never
understand,
clumps of my Breath blooming then vanishing
in the Air,
merging with the Breath of billions of others,
breathing somewhere beneath
this borderless Sky.

Sylvie Kalenda

Bubbling into Easter & Passover, don'cha know

Maybelle's **Fireside stories**

WHY, IF IT isn't a whole year since everyone in Lake WhaddayathinkImean has been social distancing due to COVID, don'tcha know. And now with Easter and Passover upon us, what are families and friends supposed to do? Now you know ol' Maybelle's going to put my two and-half cents into this, so here goes…

#1 Keep bubbling. Yep. Even if you got one or two of your COVID vaccine shots, you still need to be vigilant. Bubble bubble, no un-masking, no trouble.

#2: Hug the holiday like a good friend who you miss being able to hug in person. That's right. Make your home festive. Dig out your Easter decorations or Passover plates and storybooks … make a special holiday meal, even if it's just for one or two.

#3 Dye Easter eggs. If you don't want to use real eggs, then cut some out of paper and decorate them. Fun for the kids and the kid inside you. That's right. Cut and weave some coloured paper together and hang it like streamers from your drapes or blinds. Be creative. Have fun.

#4 Make Easter or Passover baskets. Don't have a basket? Grab a cardboard box and go to town covering it with coloured paper, newspaper, or paint, or crayon. Cut strips of newspaper and fill 'er up. Then place bunny cookies or chocolates inside, or whatever else you want for that matter…think outside of the bunny box.

#5 Give the Easter box to a friend or neighbour who needs cheering up, with a sweet message. Just leave it on their doorstep. What a wonderful surprise. "Somebody cares about me?" You bet they do!

#6 Zoom, Skype, Whattsapp, or Facetime with your friends and family. Maybe arrange to eat dinner together virtually. Share thoughts and feelings about the holiday…make it meaningful AND fun.

#7 Easter egg hunt, anyone? If you're bubbling with family, be they grownups or little ones, hide some eggs in the house and declare: "The hunt is one!" Or, have an egg-in-a-spoon race. Ol' Maybelle will never forget the fun I had competing with my pet bear, Bogart. Have you ever tried it? You do it with a RAW egg. You amp up the possibility of spill and mess, but that's half the fun. Just put an egg in the bowl part of a spoon, the handle part between your teeth and walk as fast as you can, balancing it as you compete with another player.

I can tell you sure as my name is Maybelle, what my good friends, Vilma Yuccch, Officer Stanley Penelope McBottom (her significant smother), Beanpole Starkman, Twindle Mumbly, Sybil Beaucannon Hughes and I are going to do on Easter. Oh, and, of course, Bogart. We're going to Zoom together during dinner. We're dressing up … of course we'll only see the top half of what we're wearing, so I'm going to get all dolled up from the waist up, and wear nice cozy jammie bottoms and my big furry flip flops, don'cha know. Bogart's going to wear the Easter bow-tie I made for him (covered with eggs and bunnies). We're all going to say something special about the holiday… you know share our thoughts and feelings…then savour our meals, virtually together…share a few jokes, wish each other well, burp a couple of times for good measure and be grateful for seeing each other at this special time of year.

Now, Vilma and Officer McB are in my bubble, so they just might decide to break bread with me and Bogart at my cottage, don'tcha know. Either way, we will spend time together. And with that in mind, I wish you, dear reader, a very Hoppy Easter and Passover. May the force with you, and if its line is busy, you just show up in its place!

Maybelle's Fireside Stories is written by Jerelyn Craden. Jerelyn's books, "Vessie Flamingo Outshining the Moon," and "Maybelle's Cure for What Ails You" are available at amazon.com

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Callum Morrison holding a PRS2 moisture probe (measures volumetric moisture at six different depths down to 1 meter) at our long-term cover cropping experiment in Carman, Manitoba which compares rotations using cover crops and those without cover crops.

PhD student launches farming survey on cover crops

MIKE BAKER

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A PhD student from the University of Manitoba wants to engage with farmers from Haliburton County to gather information for a study he's working on focusing on the use of cover crops across Ontario.

Callum Morrison has dedicated the past two years of his life towards investigating cover crops and the potential benefits they provide both to farmers and the environment. Cover crops are generally planted to cover soil in a farmer's field rather than for the purpose of being harvested.

"This is a really important study, because cover crops are an expanding area of interest," Morrison told *County Life*. "They have tremendous potential to benefit the environment and soils. Governments are starting to watch and take notice too of farmers that are using cover crops. Down in the States, the government is actwually incentivizing cover crop use… That could be something we eventually start to see [in Canada] too."

In an effort to hear how Ontario farmers are using cover crops, Morrison launched an online survey via SurveyMonkey to gauge responses. At the time of speaking with *County Life*, Morrison had received responses from 416 farmers. The survey will be available online until early April.

There are only two regions in which Morrison has had a limited response – Muskoka and Haliburton County.

"It's important for us to engage with all types of stakeholders in the industry across all regions. The north is a region that is important. Haliburton and Muskoka, the farmers and the information they have possess great value to the study," Morrison said. "If I'm doing research into Ontario, I can't exactly miss out part of Ontario."

By the time he's done, Morrison hopes to have engaged with at least 30 farmers from all regions. Far from acting as a lone agent, his study has been backed by 13 different organizations and associations across the province, including the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Grain Farmers of Ontario, the Ecological Farmers of Ontario, the Ontario government and the Ontario Soil Network.

This latest survey follows in the footsteps of a similar project he carried out in western Canada last year, covering parts of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Upon completion of his survey in Ontario, he intends to study the data compiled in both and provide separate reports to industry leaders.

Some of the information he's received already has been quite interesting, Morrison notes, with only four per cent of farmers who participated in the survey and reported planting cover crops saying they saw a decrease in profits after doing so.

Around 30 per cent of farmers reported seeing no change, 30 percent said they saw a slight profit and 10 percent stated they saw a significant profit.

"While the profits are nice, we're hearing all sorts of other benefits that farmers are experiencing as a result of planting cover crops. The big one we're hearing over and over again is general improvements to soil health," Morrison said. "We're also hearing reports of reduced erosion, increased soil organic matter, reduced compaction, increased nitrogen, less weeds, more earthworms and some farmers are even saying they need less tillage."

Despite that, Morrison is adamant he is not necessarily an advocate for cover crops.

"I don't want to say if you grow cover crops you will see financial benefits, necessarily. What I'm doing here is not trying to prove cover crops are great, instead just prove what they are," Morrison said.

At this stage, he just wants to hear from as many farmers as possible to provide a more well-rounded and complete analysis of the use of cover crops in Ontario.

"I want to hear from people who have grown cover crops and those who haven't. Their farms can be of any size and any kind. They can be organic, non-organic, fruit and vegetables, livestock, grain – we just want to hear from farmers to expand our knowledge of cover cropping practices in Ontario," Morrison concluded.

For more information, or to access the online survey, visit surveymonkey.com/r/ontariocovercrop.

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The grocery list

JO-ANN SLOAN

Special to *County Life*

We were still in the midst of a pandemic and this coronavirus was not going away any time soon. Every day, there were new cases. There were new outbreaks. We were being bombarded by facts, rules and regulations to follow. Boy, I was having a hard enough time trying to remember what was open, where I was allowed to go and whatever you do *don't* forget your mask.

The grocery store had now become a challenge. You had to remember to wear a mask. You had to sanitize your hands. You had to remain six feet apart [although most people were struggling with this measurement, or just decided that six feet meant two feet] and then there were the directional arrows on the floor in the aisles at the grocery store. Plus, if you bring your own grocery bags, be prepared to bag your own!

The world of grocery shopping was a whole new experience.

On this one particular day, my husband jotted down a grocery list comprised of a few items. I immediately volunteered to make the trek into town.

I was fired up! This was exciting! I had not been to a grocery store for at least two weeks. I browsed through my closet to muster up some decent clothes to wear other than track pants and sweatshirts. I discovered a pair of lonely old jeans – 'pick me, pick me!' I pondered the jeans only because they may not fit. Eventually, the jeans won because they had an elastic waist. My T-shirt did not matter as I would be bundled up in my warmest winter coat. Then, I had to consider make-up. This was an outing surrounded with people. I had to look good or at least suitable for a store. But then I thought... wait... who's going to see my face. The mask will cover up everything. That idea got tossed right out the window.

I was now set to go.

We had just received a few more centimetres of snow on top of the good base we already had. It was beautiful outside but it was also bitterly cold. Normally, my husband would take the trip into town but he was busy woodworking and I needed to escape our kingdom.

My car sat in the driveway, partly buried with a substantial layer of snow along with ice build up. I yanked open my frozen door; started the car and ensured the heater was at full blast. Then out came the scrapper. Minutes passed and I was now ready to head out down the driveway and up the hill.

Just as I was approaching the end of our driveway, it appeared that some neighbourhood kids decided to use the inclining road as a toboggan runway. In a flash, I spotted two young lads racing at full speed. I was able to slam on my breaks in good time but that sudden stop put me right into a snow bank. Rats. I was stuck.

My past winter driving lessons kicked

see page 12

Highlands summer festival 2021 Live Theatre

Welcome to the Highlands Summer Festival Photo Contest

Each month we post a photo from one of the shows we presented over the past two decades. The challenge for you is to identify the show and the year it was presented. There could be additional questions as well, depending on the whims of the quizmaster. All you have to do is submit your answers to

contest@highlandssummerfestival.on.ca

by the 25th of the month. We will select one winner from all the correct entries we receive. The winner will receive two tickets to any of the next season's shows. A new photo will be posted at the beginning of each month at which time we'll announce the winner of the previous contest.

It is as simple as that.

• No entry fee • No tickets to buy • No Zoom meetings to attend

….just a nostalgic stroll down our theatrical memory lane and a chance to score some tickets to the next Highlands Summer Festival season.

We did not have a winner for Contest # 10 in which Karen Frybort and Brian Kipping appeared in the 2008 murder mystery Deathtrap. Oh, and there was a Guillotine on stage as part of the set. So without a winner to, we will carry the ever-growing stack of tickets forward to the next contest and will award six tickets to next season to anyone who can answer the questions to…..

Contest #11

The challenge this time will be to tell us the name of the production, the year it was on stage and the two actors appearing in this scene. To make it easier, any one of the questions, answered correctly, will be considered a winner. However, if we receive more than one correct response, answering the additional questions correctly will serve as our tie breaker.

Send your entry by April 25 to:

contest@highlandssummerfestival.on.ca

Watch for the winner to be announced and the next contest in this location in early May. *Good Luck!!!*

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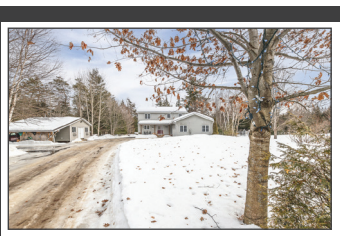


Adele Barry
705-457-0306

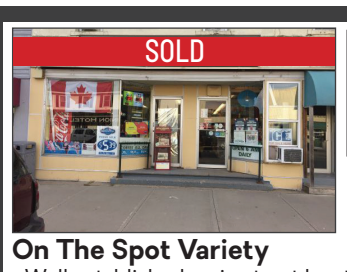
Gull River, West Guilford $799,000

- Custom Built
- Open concept 3 Bed
- 240 ft frontage
- Access to 3 chain lake

Dagmar Boettcher**
457-5968

Kushog Lake $975,000

- 2-bedroom, 1-bathroom vintage log cabin
- 132 ft of waterfront on 4 acres
- West facing gorgeous sunsets
- Clean rock shelf shore + sand beach



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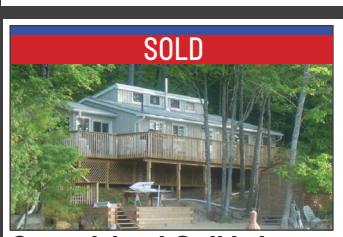
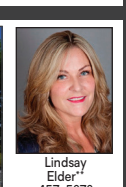


Tom Ecclestone*
286-2138 x 226

Sugar Island Gull Lake

- 125 ft sand shoreline
- 2 bedroom, 615sq.ft.
- 1 bdrm Bunkie,
- Newer septic, upgraded elec



Lindsay Elder**
457-5878

Highway 35 $999,000

- Great commercial lot right on highway 35
- Close to new business developments
- Fantastic business opportunity

Andrew Hodgson**
286-2138 x 229

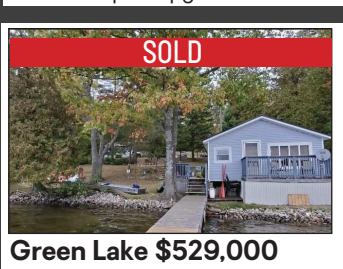
Beech River $699,000

- Riverfront home in a lovely setting
- Nicely updated 3 bedroom, 2 bath
- Two finished levels of living space
- Good swimming, boat into Beech Lake

Susanne James*
& Andy Mosher**
457-2128 x 133

Mink Rd. $109,900

- Approx 1 acre, nicely forested, good privacy
- Close to public access to Long/Miskwabi Lake
- Year-round Municipal Road access
- Minutes to Haliburton Village



David Lee*
286-2138 x 227

Green Lake $529,000

- 125 ft sand shoreline
- 2 bedroom, 615sq.ft.
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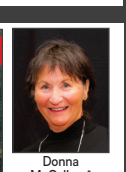

Donna McCallum*
455-2054

Soyers Lake $1,750,000

- Breathtaking home on premier 5-lake chain
- 2500+SQ FT, open concept, 4 beds, 4 bath
- 285 FT of sand shoreline, deep off the dock
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Brandon Nimigon***
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Haliburton Multi-Rental $395,000

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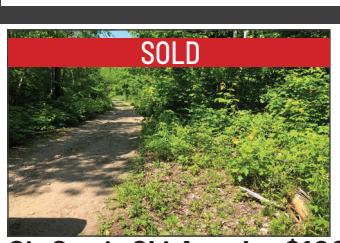

Karen Nimigon**
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Sir Sam's Ski Area lot $109,000

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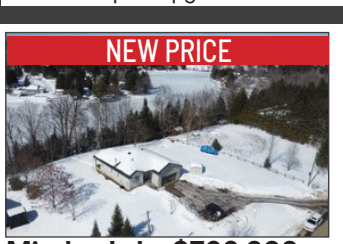

Kelly Kay*
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Minden Lake $799,000

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Darlene Reil*
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Loop Road $220,000

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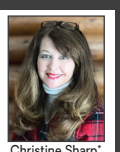

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Greg Stamp*
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Kennisis Lake $1,699,000

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Melanie Vigrass*
286-2138 x 232

Gull River, Deep Bay Rd $199,000

- 145' frontage, 0.8 acres
- Year Round Municipal Road
- Southern Exposure
- Boat into Gull Lake or Minden

Lindsay Wilkinson*
286-2138 x 223

Little Cameron Lake $925,000

- Spectacular views from 14' wall of windows
- 182' waterfront
- Full walkout basement

Andrea Wilson**
705-457-6694

Barry Line Rd $149,900

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A tale of wine and worcestershire sauce

from page 10

into gear and in no time I was able to maneuver myself off the snowbank and proceed with caution into town.

There was an empty parking spot close to the entrance of the store that I aimed to claim. No problem. I made it.

So, let's double check, I thought. I have my grocery bags, I have my list and I have.... wait... I cant find my mask. I have my phone, wallet, and sanitizer but no mask. This cannot be happening! I tried to phone my husband but he was not answering his phone.

With a deep sigh, I headed back home for my mask. By this time, I wasn't sure it was all worth the effort. "Yes it was, I kept telling myself. This is an outing! I hadn't even bothered to look at the list but it didn't matter. I knew it was tucked away in my purse.

By the time I got back to the store, my prime parking spot was taken. So, I circled around and ended up parking down the road. It had now started to snow again.

The store was busy so at this point I was determined to get in, shop and get out. I reached into my purse and found the list, which instantly slipped from my hand onto the floor into a giant puddle of melted snow muck. "No," I yelled. People were now looking. "No worries," I said as I reached down to pick it up.

And there it was – cheddar cheese, milk, bread, chips and "W...e..... Part of the list was soaked eliminating the legibility of the last item.

Another attempt was made to contact my husband. There was no service in the store. I quickly made my way around, picked up the items I could read and got through the cash.

Outside, I pondered. What was that last item. It starts with a W.

I know, I thought – it's wine!!

This had now turned out to be a wonderful day - A trip to the wine store. Yippee. I grabbed a couple of bottles and headed home.

The snow now had turned into ice pellets. The roads were becoming treacherous. Our driveway was slick so I pulled up close to the garage door and tried to open it with the automatic opener. It was stuck. Nothing was moving. Oh well, I don't care. Just let me get into that front door. I grabbed the grocery bag and the paper bag filled with bottles of wine.

And then it happened, my feet went out from under me,down I went, my one boot went flying and the one bag flew out of my hand. My back was now aching but I managed to "save the wine bag". I got up found the doorway and finally I was in the house with a sore back, a wet foot and a wet bag of groceries.

My husband was in the kitchen and saw that I was in quite a state and somewhat flustered. I didn't even bother to tell him I had fallen. He immediately started to unpack the grocery bag.

"There's something missing", he said.

"Well, " I said. " The list jumped out of my hand and dropped into a puddle inside the grocery store but I retrieved it and was able to make out the last item. "

I kept thinking – he will be so proud of me. And then I pulled out the two bottles of wine.

"Wait", he said. "That wasn't on the list!"

"Are you sure. What else would we need that started with a 'W.' I replied.

He said, "Worcestershire sauce!"

With a giant sigh, I headed to the couch; sat with a glass of W... from the grocery list, and mumbled to my husband – "next time you can take the grocery list and go."

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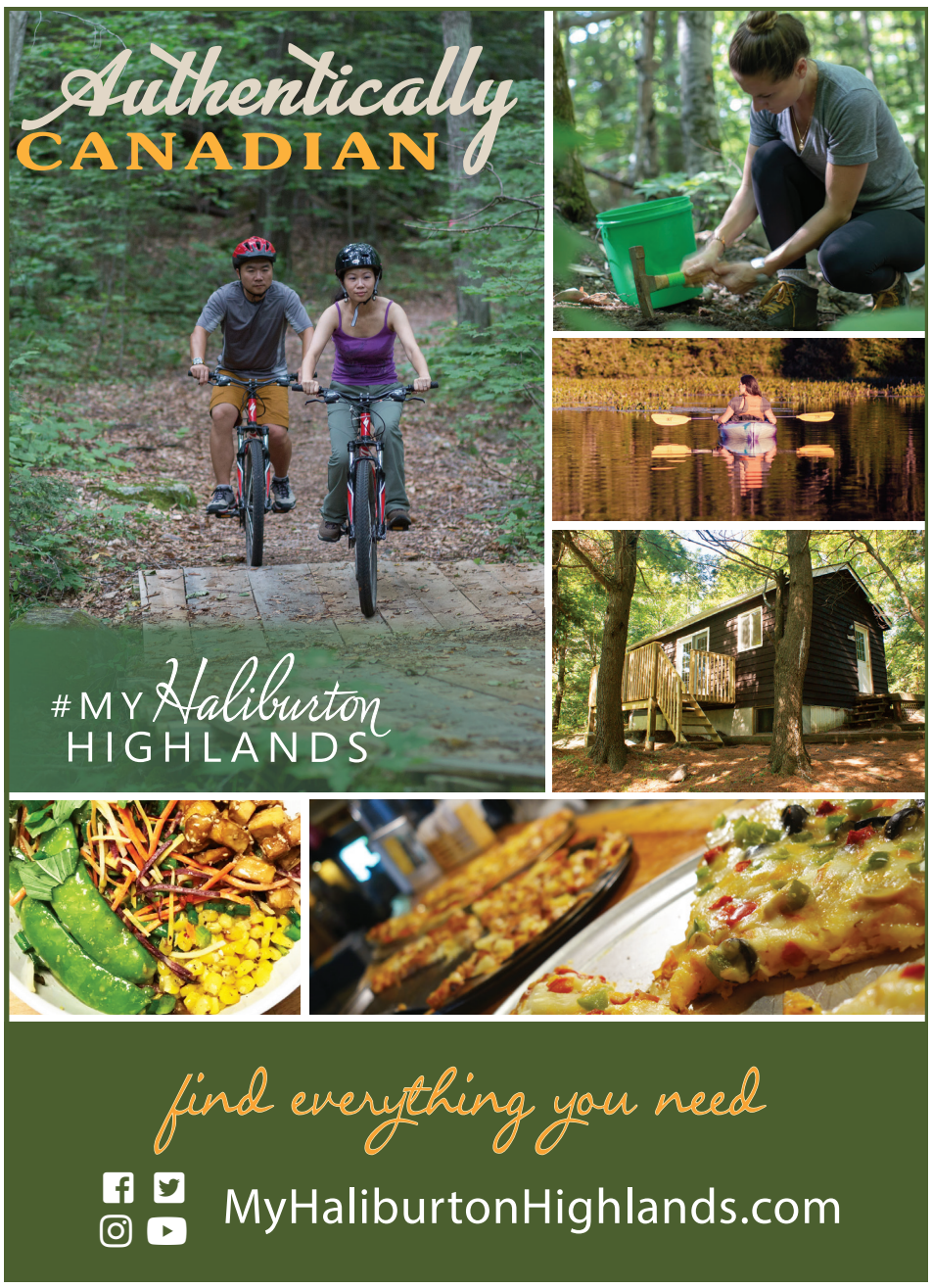

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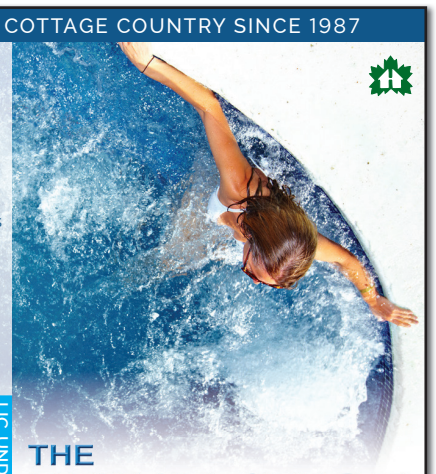

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Education funding is "not as dire as first anticipated"

by PETER DOWNS
Staff Reporter

Contrary to its earlier fears of deep cuts, the area's school board will receive a slight increase in provincial funding over the next three years.

Board officials were "cautiously optimistic" late last week after a first look at the government's new funding model for education.

But they say more details from Queen's Park and more analysis are required before they can draw a clear picture of the impact the funding changes will have on the school system.

And they're not ruling out possible layoffs for some teachers, school support workers and administrative staff.

However, last week's announcement of stable funding came as a relief to board administrators and trustees bracing themselves for the worst.

"I'm very cautiously optimistic," said Evelyn Brown, the board's acting director. "I think the situation is not quite as dire as was anticipated."

"I breathed a little bit of a sigh of relief when I first read it ... but we're still waiting to break it down more and see the final implications," said board chair Cheryl Murdoch.

"I breathed a little bit of a sigh of relief when I first read it ... but we're still waiting to break it down more and see the final implications," said board chair Cheryl Murdoch

She and Brown said it could take the board's finance administrators at least two weeks to provide a more detailed analysis of the numbers.

Queen's Park, which took complete control of education funding in January, has promised to spend $14.4-billion per year over the next three years while reducing "administrative waste."

The funding model — delayed for months and then leaked by the Liberals last Monday before its official release two days later — attempts to equalize per pupil funding across the province, regardless of location, religion or the economy of the area.

"The funding formula is based on student needs. I think that's a great breakthrough. It's what people asked for," said Victoria-Haliburton MPP Chris Hodgson. "... It's good news for parents. It's good news for students, particularly in our area. And it's good news for teachers."

Local taxpayers also benefit from the funding reforms, he

See EDUCATION page 6

A FANCIFUL TRADITION: Wilberforce figure skaters used their imagination to see what lives Under the Sea during Saturday night's skating carnival. More photos on page 21; story on page 22.

High winds leave much of the county in darkness

by MARTHA PERKINS
Editor

It was a stormy and a very dark night for thousands of people across the county when high winds toppled trees and hydro wires, blacking out dozens of areas.

At first, Ontario Hydro thought a tornado might have ripped through the county, given the speed of phone calls from people who's hydro went out just after four o'clock on Saturday afternoon. But when the crews went out, they found the trees broken, not twisted, which indicates the culprit was very high winds.

"There were no major problems, just a lot of little ones," says Minden's first line manager, Everitt McKnight. "The storm broke trees everywhere."

See HYDRO page 4

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County Budget: *Downloading adds to the total cost, but might not have impact on taxes*

by MARTHA PERKINS
Editor

Even though the county has to pick up an extra $4.34-million in services as part of the province's downloading initiative, this might not translate into a tax increase for property owners.

The county will receive a grant for $2.34-million more than it got last year under the province's Community Reinvestment Fund to help municipal governments cope with their new responsibilities, such as social assistance, public health and ambulances.

When you take into consideration the $1.8-million it no longer has to pay for education, this means most of the costs for the downloaded services are covered by the grant. (To get the grant the county must cut its own spending by $200,000.)

However, absorbing the costs of the OPP is not part of the downloading process because the responsibility was going to be transferred anyway. At a per household rate of $90, paying for the OPP would cost taxpayers an extra $1.8-million a year, but the county has applied for provincial funding to cover this amount.

It's a complicated accounting system, to say the least. The province is downloading services, but it is also making funds available to pay for them. The catch is that this funding is only expected to be offered this year and next, potentially creating a big tax hike in the year 2000.

The county's preliminary budget for 1998, including police, is $24.4-million. Of that, local property owners will be responsible for $6.5-million. (A final budget won't be passed until councils and the public have time to respond to the spending proposals.) Highlights include:

- $273,600 to run the county office
- $66,000 for Mutual Fire Aid (primarily to update and co-ordinate radio systems)
- $521,710 for the county's share of health unit costs
- $1.6-million for ambulance services (still administered by the Ministry of Health)
- $460,000 for Hyland Crest on a total budget of $2.5-million
- $823,000 for social housing (rent-geared-to-income subsidies)
- $5,000 for the railway corridor maintenance
- $10,000 to advance the strategic plan
- $10,000 for the new marketing committee
- and $40,000 for the Chamber of Commerce.

The county no longer has to pay for the Children's Aid Society.

"It's not horrendous if we get funding for the OPP," says CAO Les Shepherd, "but there are so many things thrown into the pot it's hard to tell."

As well, with all the changes in assessment – many in the upward direction – it's difficult to forecast what impact all the

See COUNTY'S page 4

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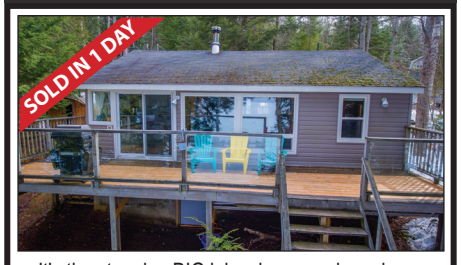

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ARCHIE STREET
$439,000

Conveniently located in a quiet neighborhood. Bright and spacious 4 bdrm, 2 bath home with many recent improvements. Large kitchen and open concept dining and living area. Four-season sunroom that leads to a large deck. 20 x 28 garage. Large family room with a propane stone fireplace. A short 3 minute walk to all of Minden's attractions and amenities

COMMERCIAL
THE LAKE VIEW MOTEL $1,950,000

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VACANT LOTS

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0.59AC $359,000 SOLD

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0.59AC $79,900

LOUISE LANE
35+AC $275,000

HIGHWAY 35
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